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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**JURY FINDS PHINEHAS WEEKES GUILTY OF  
WEAPONS CHARGES ON RETRIAL AFTER A HUNG JURY**

United States Attorney David M. Nissman announced today that a federal jury in St. Croix found PHINEHAS WEEKES guilty on Wednesday, April 7, 2004 of weapons charges including the federal charges of discharging a firearm within a school zone and possessing a weapon during a crime of violence, and the Territorial charge of unauthorized Possession of a firearm. This was a retrial of a case originally tried in January 2004 in which a jury found the Defendant not guilty of attempted murder, but hung as to the remaining weapons charges. On the retrial which started on Monday, April 5, 2004 with jury selection, the jury was sent to deliberate around 12:00 Noon, and returned its verdict by 1:20 p.m. The Defendant was found guilty on all three submitted counts and was remanded back into custody by District Judge Raymond Finch.

The charges arose out of an incident that occurred on August 30, 1999. Weekes

had a dispute with the victim on that date, because the victim collided with Weekes' parked car by accident. Although the victim offered to fix his car, Weekes shot the victim by discharging a bullet through the driver's door of the victim's truck. The victim sped away in his truck, and Weekes continued firing shots, one of which struck the victim in his head. Fortunately, the victim survived. The incident occurred outside Weekes' apartment at Ralph DeChabert Housing Community about 9 a.m.

Although the indictment was returned on December 15, 1999, and a warrant was issued for the arrest of Weekes, he left the jurisdiction before the return of the indictment, and the issuance of the arrest warrant, and was eventually arrested in New Orleans in June 2002 after a traffic stop. He was removed to the Virgin Islands thereafter. He has been in custody since his arrest. Weekes faces a maximum sentence of three years imprisonment on the Territorial charge of unauthorized possession of a firearm, 10 years maximum imprisonment on the federal charge of discharging a firearm, and a mandatory 10 years imprisonment on the federal charge of possessing a firearm during the commission of a crime of violence.

United States Attorney Nissman thanked the Virgin Islands Police Department for the investigation and for their assistance in the prosecution of the case.